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DRAMATICS

An Educational Magazine for Directors, Teachers, and Students of Dramatic Arts

XXXII, No. 5

FEBRUARY, 1961

Vol. 32, No. 5

IT'S FUN TO
BE DISCIPLINED

THE CHOICE
IS YOURS!

COULD MY CHILD
STUDY DANCE?

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ARE BORN

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SPEAKING

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BROADWAY



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Patrick Flannigan is an Irish American widower of 1912 faced with the problem of bringing up four daughters ranging from seven to seventeen. A deep believer in democracy and higher education, he runs his family on the parliamentary principal. A family council decides all issues. This system gets him in trouble when his eldest daughter, Maggie, falls in love and wants to abandon college for marriage. Patrick refuses, and Maggie then places the matter before the family council where the dismayed father soon finds himself defeated in good parliamentary fashion. Trapped by his own system, he repudiates the council and kicks Maggie's suitor out of the house. Maggie and her sisters then declare war on their father, and after great harassment Patrick finally surrenders to the marriage. Running parallel with the main theme is the minor one of Patrick's old friend Finnegan who is in flight from alimony payments. He comes to sponge on the Flannigans. His presence creates complications in an already crowded household, and leads to a sour love affair between the woman-hating Finnegan and Mrs. Gallup, the Flannigan housekeeper.

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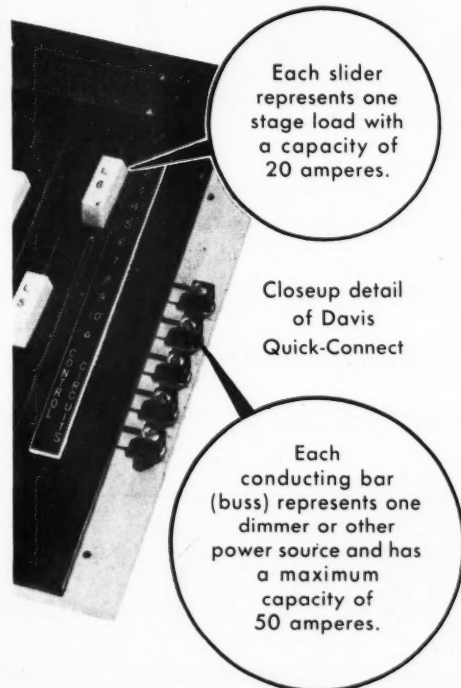
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FREDERICK Madeo, Sponsor of Troupe 1488, Fallsburgh Central High School, Woodridge, New York, emphasizes production of more serious dramas by our member schools. Not that he finds fault with quality comedies, but rather a recognition that dramatic plays are not beyond the capabilities of high school students. His article, *The Choice Is Yours!*, is challenging and provocative. Mr. Madeo anticipates a Spring production of *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller.

PORTIA Mansfield, co-director with Charlotte Perry of the Perry Mansfield Camps and School of the Theater and Dance, Steamboat Springs, Colorado, a former member of the Pavley-Oukrainsky Ballet, and choreographer of The Perry-Mansfield Dancers, authors the second challenging article of this issue — *Should My Child Study Dance?* In this article she stresses the value of dancing for all ages and for both sexes. She likewise offers pointers concerning the age a child should receive dancing lessons and defines qualifications of a good dancing school or studio. All Thespians, as well as their parents, should read this article.

DELWIN B. Dusenbury introduces us to yesterday's movie stars in his article, *The Stars Are Born*, the fifth in his series of the History of American Motion Pictures. Several of the stars mentioned are the incomparable Mary Pickford, the athletic Douglas Fairbanks, the siren Theda Bara, and the sensational Pearl White. The star pattern set in 1912 is still followed today by the movie industry.

PAUL A. Carmack continues his Speech Education series with *Extemporaneous Speaking*. Learning to speak well in public is hard, grinding work, which too many students are not willing to pay the price to become effective speakers. Dr. Carmack states, "It seems odd that there is so little time spent in many schools to improve oral communication. Many students ignore its existence or impatiently tolerate the urgency for proficiency."

FRIEDA Reed, editor of our Theater for Children Department, features this month the Children's Theater presented by Roosevelt High School, Honolulu, Hawaii, sponsored and directed by Grace W. McAlister, Sponsor of Troupe 1400. At this school the children's play is its biggest project. Mrs. McAlister's latest production was *Sleeping Beauty*. Have you incorporated yet one play for children in your annual theater program? Mrs. McAlister tells you why you should.

WE have omitted our monthly Back Stage in order to include the brief article, *It's Fun To Be Disciplined*, by Carl Marder, Sponsor of Troupe 2040, Robert E. Lee High School, Tyler, Texas. The article is in itself an editorial and written well — in fact much better than one written on the same subject by your editor.

MR. Jones's Best of Broadway is the new musical comedy, *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, based on a true-life story. This musical comedy, when released for amateur performance, should be as popular with high schools as was, and still is, *Annie Get Your Gun*.

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LIFE OF THE PARTY

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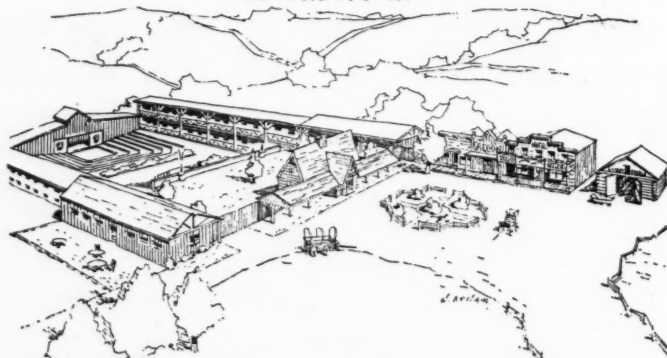
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IT'S FUN TO BE DISCIPLINED

By CARL MARDER

"ONE of my biggest jobs as Stage Manager for the Broadway show *Gypsy* is to keep discipline backstage and onstage."

These words from Lo Hardin, now Stage Manager of the show *Gypsy*, almost startled me as I sat listening to him lecture to my class at the Dallas Theater Center this past summer. Never before had I realized professional theater people needed to be disciplined—almost like children. As I wondered why, the question was answered for me, "Because these people did not reflect a professional attitude toward the theater. They were people working in the theater (probably temporary, too) for 'kicks.' To be in theater and be a success, you must know how to discipline yourself," Mr. Hardin concluded. He told of the tremendous discipline possessed by the star of *Gypsy*, Miss Ethel Merman. "This is why she is a great performer."

I considered my students back home at Robert E. Lee High School in Tyler, Texas. Certainly, I must have disciplined them, but it never seemed to be a problem. Why? I thought about it a great deal and came up with the following observations.

The word "discipline" carries a connotation of restrain which the average person wants to reject. But, to be in drama you must rapidly learn to discipline yourself, and my students had learned this—quickly and without any trouble. I would imagine our drama work at Lee is among the most demanding work in the school for students. But, I am sure if you asked a student if he felt a strong hand of discipline or work in the drama department, he would say no. No, because he found discipline is fun. We think we want complete freedom of ourselves, and certainly "the easy way out." Through

drama our students have learned differently.

By being disciplined in mind, body and spirit, they have learned they can succeed far beyond what they felt their abilities were. Too, because of this control, they discovered they had more freedom, though it is a different kind than they thought they wanted.

Obviously, an actor on stage cannot

learn hundreds of pages of lines, or a person backstage cannot keep his mind solely on his job at the time unless he learns mental discipline. Too, an actor's body—his movements—must be completely controlled. This comes through physical discipline. We usually associate and stress mental discipline with science and physical discipline is thought of in line with athletics. Some athletes have said we exercise more than football players. Certainly, it could be true. A college instructor once said an actor in a three-act play uses more energy than a baseball pitcher pitching nine innings of baseball. Any actor who has succeeded on stage will surely add his confirmation to this. Also, to portray emotion at a given moment one must control his own spirit. To work, after long, hard hours, together harmoniously, to take criticism constantly, surely, there is an element of discipline or control of self.

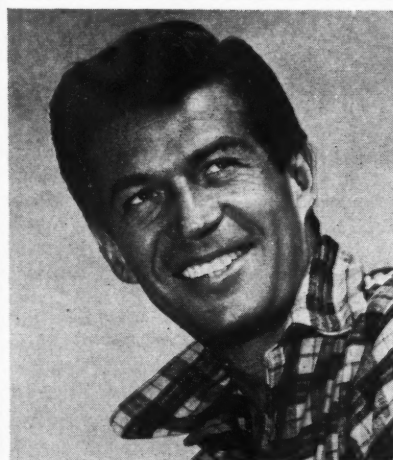
I have also found that usually my best actors and actresses turn out to be good students in all areas of school. This is because they are disciplined people. They learn to organize, use their time well and wisely and *concentrate their whole being on the task at hand*, whatever it might be—learning lines or preparing for a history quiz.

Yet, drama is fun. Students quickly recommend it as a "fun course" to others. Yes, and to be disciplined is fun, and one way found to teach this is through work in drama.

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By FREDERICK MADEO

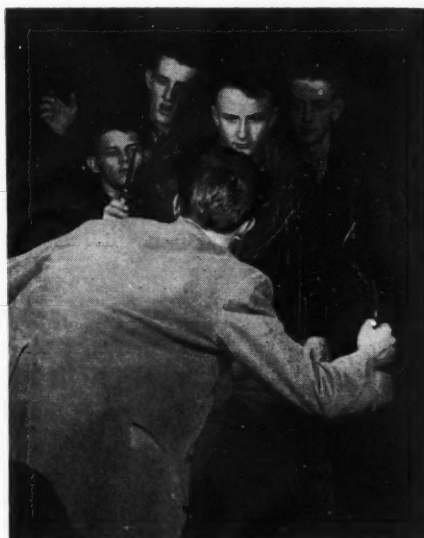
RUNNING through the 1959-1960 list of the most frequently produced plays by affiliate schools of the National Thespian Society, one notices a glaring discrepancy: that the number of comedies produced exceed by far the number of serious dramas. The obvious conclusion seems to be that the secondary school director hesitates to tackle serious plays.

In almost too many instances, there are some practical reasons for this. Many high school directors are teachers of English who have had no academic background or practical experience in the theater. Many such directors feel "safer" with comedies. Another reason is the time element. Directors find they are handicapped with a full teaching load and other related responsibilities, and therefore they avoid the serious drama since, undoubtedly, it requires more intense work than the comedy—especially on the high school level.

There are, however, other reasons which deter the director from producing serious plays which, in reality, this writer feels are less valid since they can be overcome by the intelligent and willing director. They are: (1) lack of money, (2) lack of equipment, (3) lack of talent, and (4) lack of community support. In discussing each of these reasons it is understood by this writer that they may apply to all or to many schools according to the relative situations that exist. Nonetheless, the four reasons are unconvincing arguments for avoiding the serious drama in high school.

(1) Lack of money. On the whole, it costs no more to produce a serious play than a comedy. Royalties and the cost of playbooks are standard for both. The need for scenery or costumes in a play which poses problems because of the prohibitive cost to the school or Thespian Troupe is simply overcome by intelligent imagination. Although scenery and costumes may be called for in the selected play, the director would do well to ask himself whether these are actually necessary for the success of the play. For example, many plays which have been produced elaborately on stage have been equally successful artistically when done in arena style.

(2) Lack of equipment. This is somewhat a greater problem for those



Rebel without a Cause, Troupe 256, Twin Falls, Idaho, High School, Richard B. Johnson, Sponsor



Craig's Wife, Troupe 1748, Richard Montgomery High School, Rockville, Md., Pauline A. Burkett, Sponsor

schools which have small stages and/or inadequate lighting facilities. A school that has a small stage would hesitate to use a play that calls for a large cast. On the other hand, there are many serious plays which require intricate lighting which is necessary to the overall success of the production, as in Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*. A small stage would not be inadequate to the demands of this play, but inadequate lighting would fail to capture an essential element, namely mood. Intelligent play selection often overcomes the lack of theatrical equipment.

(3) Lack of talent. For schools with a small student population this objection looms as a more valid reason than the two previously mentioned. But talent, I think, is a misnomer. "Talent," in the true sense of the word, is rare in the average secondary school, and if the director waited for such a young student before he produced a serious play, the plays would be as rare as the "talent." What the dramatics coach must look for are those students who have average or above average intelligence and who are willing to work. Desire on the part of the student very often displaces other deficiencies. The point is that "talent" is in every school if the director looks for, and creates, it.

(4) Lack of community support. This is the most specious reason for avoiding the serious play. There are those who argue that people prefer comedies and that they are more successful in winning the support of the community. Clearly, the philosophy and purpose of dramatics is not to appeal to, nor reflect, the popular taste of the community. Producing and performing for the community is only an end and not a means for the existence of drama in the high school. However, it is the

responsibility of the Thespian Troupe, or any dramatics group, to present plays of quality as an attempt to introduce good theater, both comedy and drama, to the community. Therefore all directors are bound to examine their conscience in selecting plays.

In no way does the author, in this plea for the serious drama, wish to minimize the quality plays inherent in many comedies. There are many desirable comedies which are challenging to students and directors. But the emphasis here is for schools to recognize that dramatic plays of the first order are not beyond their capabilities; that such plays offer sociological, philosophical, and psychological insights that many comedies lack; that the dramatic play offers different kinds of interpretative and acting experiences; and finally that the serious play of quality gives young actors an opportunity to participate in the imitations of human experience which may enable them to understand people and the milieu in which they live.

It is heartening indeed to see *The Diary of Anne Frank* among the top plays produced by secondary schools. Is there any reason why plays, such as *All My Sons*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Antigone*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Dino*, *Rebel Without a Cause*, to name a few at random, should not find their way among the top ten plays?

The success of a play, drama or comedy, rests with the director. It is his imagination and his zeal for artistic success which inflames his students to work to their fullest capacities. Above all, he must be willing to work hard, for no successful play was ever so accomplished by indifference. He must belie the words of Lady Macbeth:

"Alack, . . . th' attempt and not the deed confounds us."

SHOULD MY CHILD STUDY DANCE?

By PORTIA MANSFIELD

DANCE in its various forms, has become so integral a part of today's theater—as witness *Oklahoma*, *Damn Yankees*, *Red Head*, *Fair Lady* and so on—that teachers have a ready reply to parents of drama-conscious young people when they ask, "Should my child study dance?"

Besides the obvious answer that ability to dance may mean the difference between Yes or No from a casting director, it can be pointed out that study of dance, for both the talented and average student, promotes a grace and surety of carriage that helps banish self-consciousness; offers wholesome physical discipline; and develops the faculty of working both in groups and as a soloist.

Dance lessons, for people of all ages, can condition the flabby, tone up the thin, and make supple the tense and inhibited. Today's ever-increasing automaton has resulted in widespread disuse of muscles. And yet physical fitness, one of the most valuable components of efficiency and general happiness, must not become a mere fad. Joy of motion, the creating of beauty in rhythm and movement, is among the most satisfying forms of self-expression, and of making a livelihood that mankind has ever developed.

How early should dance training begin?

As with most things, this is a matter of the individual. In the case of a child, it is usually best to wait for signs of en-

joyment in moving rhythmically, either to music or through movements to dramatize imaginings. If no such interest is manifest, let the parent try what a visit to a dance class or ballet performance will do.

How about the older aspirant to dance?

Can the high school or college student, reasonably athletic but never before interested in dance, join a class and become as effective a stage figure as the student who has studied dance from early childhood?

Study of dance can begin at any time in our lives, unless we want to become professional ballet dancers; for this, early training is essential. But the teenager, collegian, or older student certainly needs not be barred from the physical and mental development; and, if he wishes, the earning capacity, that may come through dance education.

What means of livelihood does dance training offer?

Some outstanding talented students may become concert dancers, soloists, ballerinas, *premiers danseurs*. Others may take up the fascinating work of the choreographers, the designer of ballet sets—or costumes, or the dance journalist. If teaching ability is combined with dance training, a career on a college faculty, or at the head of one's own studio, may result. A specialized field just opening up for dancers with an interest in social work is "movement therapy," which is gaining recognition in



Spacious Movement and Spacious Background. A student of contemporary dance in a brief outdoor rehearsal before going into the studio to class.

medical and social service fields. The University of Wisconsin offers a course in this work.

Most dance authorities the world over now agree that well-rounded training includes not one but several phases of dance. The applicant for a dancing role on Broadway should be proficient in both the classic ballet and contemporary modern technique. Choreographers, both here and in Europe, tend to stress a combination of the two, blending the flawless control and grace of the traditional dance with the more expressive

(Continued on Page 30)



The Classic Grace of the traditional ballet is illustrated by this group, posed against a natural backdrop of trees and mountains.

THE STARS ARE BORN

By DELWIN B. DUSENBURY

THE silent screen first dominated by the personality of the director soon came under the magical, but nonetheless potent, influence of the "star" system. In the beginning the actors wanted to remain anonymous because of their disdain for the "galloping tintypes." As one trade journal reported in 1910:

While the pictures have attained a distinct prominence and are now recognized as a standard attraction, the people playing in them are very sensitive about having their identity become known. They have an impression that the step from regular stage productions to the scenes before the camera is a backward one.

While some critics have deplored the "star" system as detracting from the true significance of the films as a pictorial form of creative expression, the American public began to demand pictures featuring their favorites such as "Broncho Billy" Anderson, the jovial John Bunny, and the "Vitagraph Girl," Florence Lawrence, whose anonymity was revealed by Carl Laemmle when he hired her for his independent company. Probably no single person so completely captivated the American movie-going public, however, as "the girl with the curls" who was to become America's



Charles Ray (1891-1943), as he appeared in *The Girl I Loved* (1923). His bashful, boyish, naive rural "hero" was a distinct contrast to the strong silent type of box-office favorite. He gained his greatest popularity on the silent screen between 1917-1919.



Charles Chaplin, Mary Pickford, and Douglas Fairbanks were America's "Top Three" silent screen stars. In 1919 with D. W. Griffith they formed their own producing company, United Artists Corporation, and one critic commented, "The asylum is now in the hands of the maniacs!"

first lady of the screen — Mary Pickford.

Born Gladys Marie Smith in Toronto in 1893 of English-Irish parentage, she became the bread-winner of her family as a child actress in a local stock company. The popularity of little Gladys, intelligent and amiable, with her golden hair and soft blue eyes, with theater audiences lead the Smith family into local and touring stock companies and eventually to New York. She went to see the eminent producer, David Belasco, who was amused at her untheatrical name. After listening to a recital of family names, he selected "Pickford,"—her grandfather's name was John Pickford Hennessey—and then suggested she adopt the Anglicized form of her middle name. Thus Gladys Smith became Mary Pickford. Her younger sister Lottie and her brother Jack, both young thespians, also adopted the new family name.

Mary, at the age of thirteen, was determined to be a success. In her autobiography, she recalls a statement to Mr. Belasco:

I think I'm at the crossroads of my life. I've got to make good between now and the time I'm twenty, and I have only seven years to do it in. Besides, I'm the father of my family (her father died when she was five), and I've got to earn all the money I can.

Belasco cast her in *The Warrens of Virginia*, written by William DeMille, whose younger brother Cecil also had a part in the play. After a successful New York run and tour (1907-1909), at her mother's suggestion since funds were low, she curbed her pride as a "Belasco actress" and walked to the Biograph film studios on E. 14th Street

to apply for work. The first person she met she described as "a pompous and insufferable creature." He proved to be the leading director of the studio, and his name was D. W. Griffith.

Her first picture was *Her First Bisuits* in which she played a secondary role, but in her next one-reel film, *The Violin Maker of Cremona*, she played the lead opposite a charming Irish actor, Owen Moore, whom she later married. Thus a career was launched of which Adolph Zukor once said, "I am convinced that Mary could have risen to the top of United States Steel, if she decided to be a Carnegie instead of a movie star." The titles of her early films—*In Old Kentucky* (1909), *The Little Teacher* (1910), *Friends* (1912), and *The New York Hat* (1912), which co-starred Lionel Barrymore, indicated the type of sentimental melodrama which won her public acclaim. She left Biograph and joined Carl Laemmle, one of the most aggressive of the independent producers. Her salary was \$175.00 per week and "the girl with the curls" was advertised now as "Little Mary." James Kirkwood, pioneer actor-director of the period, often found, however, that he had to appeal to her natural sentimentality to gain the effect he wanted. To produce tears he would quarrel with her, as did his predecessor, Griffith. In extremely tragic moments he moved everyone away from the set, played sad music on a phonograph, and related unhappy stories until the tears started to flow. Possibly to demonstrate that she was an actress, she returned to the stage in Belasco's production of *A Good Little Devil* (1913).

(Continued on Page 28)

THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK

THE HAPPIEST MILLIONAIRE

THE GAZEBO

NO TIME FOR SERGEANTS

TALL STORY

VISIT TO A SMALL PLANET

THE MAN IN THE DOG SUIT

DEAR DELINQUENT

CLOUD SEVEN

INHERIT THE WIND

THE CURIOUS SAVAGE

THE TEAHOUSE OF THE AUGUST MOON

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The play revolves around the discovery by Burnham Wicks, a widower, that not only his own teenage son and daughter, but most of the teenage children of his friends, are comparing their parents with other parents, and not always too favorably. In a fit of exasperation, Mr. Wicks calls a meeting of fathers and mothers, among whom is an attractive widow, the mother of a teenage son. He proposes that as a lesson to their children they allow them to exchange parents for a period of thirty days. At first, some of the mothers view the suggestion with horror, but all are finally persuaded that some good might come of the idea.

The parents draw the children's names from a hat—and what happens to Mr. Wicks (who "won" the widow's son), and to the widow herself, to say nothing of most of the other parents and their proxy youngsters, makes for amusing entertainment. And, as the parents decide that perhaps the experiment should never have been started, the teenagers turn the tables on them, telling their parents that they like their new homes, and that they are determined to make them permanent. At this point the parents are really thrown into panic. But eventually the parents win back their own offspring—and Mr. Wicks wins the lovely widow.

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EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING

By PAUL A. CARMACK

EXTEMPORANEOUS speaking is the most usable and effective form of public speaking. Its success is grounded in long preparation in the subject matter and much practice of oral delivery. The content, well organized and planned, is delivered without memorization. It is not to be confused with impromptu speaking. A wit simplified the difference by defining the impromptu situation where "you have to say something" and the extemporaneous speech where "you have something to say." The best objective for public speaking training is the goal of the successful use of extemporaneous speech. Other forms of speech delivery may be useful, and sometimes necessary, under certain special conditions.

Today some speaking by national leaders requires ability to read a speech written by ghost writers and exhibited to the "speaker" on a mechanized teleprompter. Technology has thus reached the boundaries of speech making. The reason for reading a script speech on radio or television or before large political audiences is that in part to avert the possibility of loss of memory, thus producing an embarrassing pause, but more often to prevent misquotation, innocent or planned. When the speaker reads the written speech, he is trying to recapture or "thaw out" a spontaneity which may have been in the "deep freeze" for a period of time. Instead of the instantaneous transfer of a message from the sincere speaker to the sympathetic audience there is a dispersal of the directness of the reader-speaker. Instead of a delivery of an immediate communication, speaker to listener, the reader loses some eye contact. Thus the audience members feel a loss of an authentic plea in the delivery.

The memorized speech is limited in its use. Not many speakers have the type of memory ability which will allow them to speak at any length. Not many neophytes could memorize all materials needed as one experienced in public speaking. Unless the speech was memorized from long practice, the burden of remembering what comes next will be too heavy. If memory recall is labored, there is too much interference in communication and noticeable visible distress.

There are forms of ritual given in the church, the lodge hall, and other places where accuracy is quite important. But for the most part, extemporaneous speaking is the only workable plan for

public speech. Thus that type of speech practice which works toward this end is the best speech education. Let us consider five divisions of this kind of training.

I. Content. Prior to the time that the speaker appears before others he has an obligation to become worthy of their trust. He is usually asked to speak if the hearers feel that he has been somewhere the listeners have not visited, or he has information which they wish to receive, or he entertains them with something new or novel. This calls for much preparation and familiarity with source materials, authorities, statistics, examples, and illustrations. A student, due to his youth, will have more preparation to make than that of the more experienced speaker. He should first assess his own knowledge of his speech topic and then prepare to read widely, interview those who know, and avail himself of all facilities within his range. For example, if he plans to enter the typical scholastic extemporaneous speaking contests, he knows that topics will be selected from current affairs, state, national and international. He must prepare for a time-consuming reading of the best news sources. He can get information from the news association reports in newspapers and from newscasts. He must read extensively from magazines such as U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT, NEWSWEEK, LIFE, LOOK, and TIME. Knowledge alone won't make the speaker, but there is no serious purpose for any speech without it. The extent and depth of your education and experience is your greatest capital in stock. By wide search for knowledge of world affairs the information gained about one event shows interlocking and overlapping patterns with related events. The connections help you to understand and thereby to communicate your own interpretation to your listeners. You are wasting their time and yours unless you can state clearly the facts as they exist, and then your own conclusions clearly and with personal understanding. The speaker develops a storehouse of ideas and a wealth of facts without which he is lost on the public platform.

II. Arrangement. The plan for delivery of a speech probably takes form while the research is under way. The general outline and organization begin to suggest themselves during the search for content. The two processes are blended. A mass of facts which are not systematized could smother effective presentation. Overabundance of materials does not guarantee ability to convey its meaning to an audience. This heterogeneous collection of ideas must have life breathed into it. This is the creative contribution which makes or breaks the speaker. The imaginative touch is needed to sort materials into proper piles and then to choose the format for the proper arrangement into a speech. A time-tested formula employs

the speech divisions of (a) introduction, (b) discussion, and (c) conclusion.

A. Introduction.

Explain why this topic is important. The historical development of the current problem is a logical way to introduce the subject. Explain the meaning of the implications involved in the ultimate solution. State the main points you will stress in your speech.

B. The Discussion.

Take up the main points (one and not more than three) and develop each by illustrations, examples, quotations, and all available forms of support. You may also offer your own solution, as you see it, for the current problem.

C. The Conclusion.

Summarize your contributions and restate your main points and your recommended solution.

III. The Design for Construction. From the "lumber yard of construction materials" the decision of what to leave out is possibly the most difficult and the selection of what befits the purpose of the speech is the most important. Then comes the job of marshalling materials around the main idea. This should rank in order of importance. Subordinate ideas are used to build the point which ranks above it in importance. Sketch out a *brief outline* of what you plan for your speech organization. Practice speaking first with the outline in mind. You need not feel chained to it however.

IV. Oral Composition. The choice of words will have much to do with the quality of the speech product. Repeated practice with the aid of a good critic is one of the most helpful educational methods for improvement. This is the reason for the belief by many teachers of speech that the extemporaneous speech contest is one of the most valuable of the scholastic speech activities. A good background in language usage is a "must." It is a part of our education which we can never afford to neglect. One must welcome criticism and constantly strive for further improvement.

As often as time permits, one should practice speaking upon a variety of topics. He could almost ask himself, "How good do I wish to become?" It would be well to give a speech each day. It would be better to have a critic listen to you and jot down errors in grammar. The apparent fluency of language and thought by good speakers come about only after much practice in speaking.

Speaking is thinking aloud. It has a purposeful method and aims at clarity. The proper use of words unfolds your message. Beside delivering the practice speeches silently or aloud, it will help to write out sample speeches. The scrutiny necessary for building a speech essay will help greatly in reducing mistakes in oral presentation. The written out speech is not intended for delivery but for practice to aid oral composition and

(Continued on Page 27)

The Unsinkable Molly Brown

By CHARLES L. JONES

TO RECOIN a trite saying, "You can remove the girl from the country, but you can't remove the country from the girl." This would be an appropriate description of the heroine of one of Broadway's brightest new musical comedies, *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, which is not likely to sink into oblivion for a long time to come according to critics and box-office receipts.

In its broadest application, the title refers to the indomitable spirit of a poor Irish girl from Hannibal, Missouri, who sets out in the world on her own, stubbornly intent upon some day becoming rich and respectable. Although she achieves fabulous wealth with ease, Molly Brown has to struggle incessantly and almost in vain throughout the larger part of the show to become a lady of refinement and respectability who never quite meets the standards of high society in Denver, Colorado, because of her rustic and uncouth manner.

Based on a true-life story, Broadway's saga of Molly Brown gets underway outside her family's tumble-down shack in Hannibal at the turn of the century. Impoverished circumstances have forced Molly and her three brothers to leave home when their father can no longer support them. Being Irish, they set out with bold hearts and fighting spirits which they display in the musical's first song entitled "I Ain't Down Yet," which sets a zesty pace and mood for the remainder of the show.

With tousled hair and dressed in a burlap dress and dirty sneakers, tom-boyish Molly soon winds up in the

rough mining town of Leadville, Colorado, where she manages to get a job in the Saddle Rock Saloon playing the piano although she has never touched one in her life. She's determined to make good though and sets up all night trying to learn a few acceptable chords. The following day Molly manages somehow to accompany a gang of rowdy miners and dance hall girls in one of the most vigorous and outstanding production numbers in the show called, "Belly Up to the Bar, Boys," which vividly characterizes the brawny, robust inhabitants of Leadville.

Being used to looking out for herself, exuberant Molly makes a lasting impression on handsome Johnny "Leadville" Brown by breaking a chair over his head when he becomes too bold. Nevertheless, Johnny falls in love with Molly. She is afraid she will never be anybody if she marries him, but Molly's resistance breaks down completely one day when Johnny leads her to a lofty mountainside and shows her a cozy cabin he has built himself especially for her. He reveals how Molly affects him in a joyous song called "I'll Never Say No."

Feeling he has no appropriate gift for Molly at their wedding, Johnny vanishes on their wedding night and returns three weeks later with \$300,000 in currency he has made from a rich gold strike. In one of the most comic situations of the production Molly hides the money from any would-be thieves in the pot-bellied stove. Returning home late at night, Johnny starts a fire in the stove and the fortune goes up in smoke before Molly can come to the rescue.

Their loss is temporary, however, because Johnny's gold strikes soon made them millionaires, and they exchange their small log cabin in Leadville for a massive mansion in Denver where Molly enters the most exciting and exasperating phase of her life trying to break into high society.



Determined to be rich and a member of Denver high society, Molly Brown (Tammy Grimes) is pleased when husband Johnny (Harve Presnell) brings home a small fortune from a gold strike in the above scene from *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*.

Molly and Johnny crash a society dinner party in an attempt to be neighborly, but Mrs. McGlone, the hostess, and her elite guests give them the "cold shoulder" when Molly displays her crude, colorful language and forward behavior. When Molly gives a party and no one comes, she decides to go to Europe for dignity and culture, and then she'll show the Denver snobs a thing or two.

After having become the darling of the international set in Europe, Molly returns to Denver years later and hosts a lavish party at which she parades a dazzling assortment of Princes, Dukes, and Ladies before the unbelieving eyes of the Denver aristocracy. Unfortunately, Johnny has invited his former mining pals from Leadville who start a free-for-all brawl and not only wreck the party and mansion but also permanently wreck Molly's chances of ever succeeding as a Denver society hostess.

Johnny, tired of putting on airs, returns to Leadville; Molly, bitter from her defeat, returns with her titled friends to Europe. Eventually, Molly recognizes the unimportance of being a success in a world of tails and tiaras and goes back home to Johnny and her true friends in Leadville.

Long associated with the Loretta Young Show, Richard Morris created the book for *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, and Meredith Willson has filled it with brassy marches, refreshing and humorous novelty songs, and romantic ballads—all reminiscent of his delightful score for his first Broadway effort, *The Music Man*.

The plot of *The Unsinkable Molly Brown* unfolds in two acts of ten scenes each. Seven different sets are used for ten scenes, while all others are played in front of painted backdrops. This may be another musical comedy possible for high school production.



While sedate society guests look on in horror, Johnny's former mining pals forget their manners and start a "free-for-all" at lavish party given by Molly in her Denver mansion. The above scene is from musical *The Unsinkable Molly Brown* currently playing at the Winter Garden Theater in New York.

THEATER



FOR

CHILDREN

FRIEDA E. REED

CHILDREN'S THEATER — A VITAL
PHASE OF ANY HIGH SCHOOL
THEATER PROGRAM

REPEATEDLY we have insisted that Children's Theater can and should be one of the most vital phases of high school theater. Yes, we are saying the most *vital*! There are two strong reasons for this category of Children's Theater in high school theater. The first of these reasons is that high school theater must be more than an *activity* in the school if it is to survive the rigors of high school curriculum planning. It must justify itself! One way that it can justify itself is by rendering a real service to the community by providing good live entertainment for children. There has probably never been a time when there has been such a crying need for good live theater for children and so many children without it.

In the New York Times Magazine Section of Sunday, December 11, Joan Cook has this to say:



"The King, Queen, and Court"—*Sleeping Beauty*, Troupe 1400, Roosevelt High School, Honolulu, Hawaii, Grace McAlister, sponsor

"The plethora of passive entertainments to which children are subjected in our movie- and television-oriented age is a source of concern to many parents. Today's 'ersatz' entertainment, they feel, robs youngsters of the thrill of taking part in the mounting excitement that live theater represents.

"The live theatrical performance demands an imaginative response from its audiences. The child must share in both the players' and the set designer's special brand of make believe, a requirement that is sadly lacking in the elaborately spelled-out adventures of the screen. When the young viewer contributes his own imagination, he realizes that all art is man-made, not

the creation of a machine. The sense of theater is something in which he can take part and carry over into his daily play as his creativity grows and develops."

The challenge of this plea is self-evident. The other reason for the vitality of Children's Theater as an integral part of a high school theater program is the training provided in work on this type of play. There is no type of theater that challenges an actor's ability and his training in the basic skills of acting as does the play for a child audience.

There is never any doubt in the minds of high school theater groups who have tried Children's Theater; invariably, their testimony is much stronger than that of any adult advocate of this type of theater. *The problem is to convince Thespian Troupes to try it just once!*

From our forty-ninth state comes a report that heavily italicizes both of these values of Children's Theater: Service to the Community and Training for the Actor. Mrs. Grace W. McAlister, Sponsor of Troupe 1400, Roosevelt High School, Honolulu, Hawaii, reports on the experience of Troupe 1400 in Children's Theater.

Mrs. McAlister says:

"For the past five years the Roosevelt High School Thespian Troupe 1400 and Little Theater and Drama class have combined their efforts to make our Children's play the biggest project of the school year. The first year we wrote our own play based on the story of *Beauty and the Beast* adding scenes for crowds, such as a market scene, and a dance sequence in order to use more students eager to participate.

"At first, the high school students were a little hesitant to try a performance for a whole auditorium full of 'little kids,' but after they heard the 'oh's' and 'ah's' and indrawn breath at just the sight of footlights on the grand drape, the admiration of the costumes, the sorrow for the poor beast, and re-

¹ "Age 4 (and up) on the Aisle," Joan Cook, New York Times Magazine Section, December 11, 1960, p. 73.

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THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE PRESS

CLOVERLOT
ANCHORAGE, KENTUCKY

ceived the many letters illustrated with imaginative pictures, they were eager to make this a yearly event. The really soul-satisfying acceptance of the children has made it my students' most joyous project ever since the first year. Each year, though many of the participants graduate, there are always those who can tell the others what fun the Children's play is. I'm gratified to note that there's always this warning passed around: *You have to be good if you hope to hold the children's attention and make them believe in you and you must stay in character or you'll spoil it for the children!* Many other basics of

good acting are underscored in the warnings of the student actors to their colleagues inexperienced in Children's Theater.

"Since that first year we've presented *Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater*, and of course the children were enthralled by the vine growing before their eyes and by the pumpkin house. In *The Clown Who Ran Away*, how the children loved the horse, the dolls, the clown! Next came *Simple Simon*. Simon's big ears and the queen's nose which changed color brought gales of laughter, but from the letters we received we knew that we had put across the theme that

you shouldn't suspect and dislike people just because they *look* different.

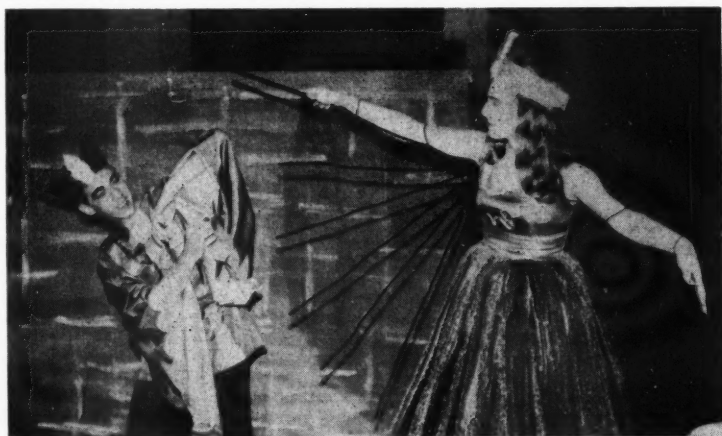
"This year, we have just produced *Sleeping Beauty*. It was a huge success too. We received a diorama from the fourth grade class at one of the attending schools. We know that we stirred the imagination of that group because, though it was never shown on stage, just mentioned in the script, those children created Beauty's Garden for us from pipe cleaners, pleated cup cake containers, shells, pebbles, and plastic birthday-candle holders. They labeled it 'Beauty's Garden in Which She Spent Many Joyous Hours.'

"Counting invited audiences for dress rehearsals, we play to about 3000 children in our neighboring schools. We don't charge for the final performance either. Our clubs pay the expenses.

"The teachers and parents have been very enthusiastic and now parents from other districts are beginning to ask if we can't present our plays for their children.

"These plays take a terrific amount of work. We work all holidays and Saturday mornings as well as after school but we feel it's well worth the effort."

It is evident that it makes no difference from what corner of the world the report comes, the theme is the same: There is nothing like Children's Theater as a medium for high school students! TRY IT AND LET US HEAR ABOUT IT!!



"The wicked fairy and Elano"—*Sleeping Beauty*



The Robe, Troupe 320, Gilbert, Minn., High School, Robert W. Schmidt, sponsor

THE ROBE

Gilbert, Minn., High School

"THE ROBE IS HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL FROM PRODUCTION STANDPOINT AND ATTENDANCE; OVER 1000 SEE PLAY. GILBERT'S AMBITIOUS PLAY 'THE ROBE' WINS PRAISE."

These headlines which appeared on the reviews are an indication of the impact the play has on the audience.

As the play opens, Christ has been crucified. His robe had been gambled for and was won by Marcellus, a Roman officer. The play shows how his life changes because of the incident by which he becomes a Christian.

Marcellus is in love with a beautiful woman named Diana. She is pledged to marry Caligula, a rowdy, dishonest friend of the governor. Diana and Marcellus are eventually married and die together as defenders of their faith.

The play form of this famous novel is a simplified acting version easily handled by ambitious students. The skeptics soon realize just how capable and ingenious high school students can be. It was through this play dramatic arts was able to build a firm foundation for future dramatic productions. After a production of this scope students are not satisfied with the trite things so often seen on a high school stage. *The Robe* is an effective means by which directors can get away from producing the poorly written high school plays.

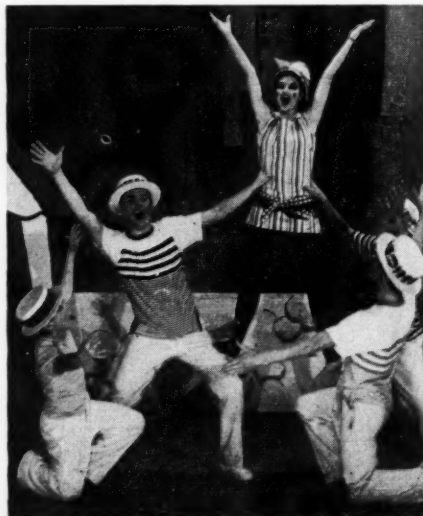
The flexibility of the play allows the director unlimited possibilities for a successful production. Our production extended over a twelve-week period but the final performance brought forth a highly polished show.

The staging was not confined to the conventional proscenium type but was split level so the nine scenes could be played simultaneously in spotlighted areas. This meant that all props and scenery had to be shifted in darkness and synchronized to musical bridges. A formalistic setting is very well suited to the period and locale of the play.

The platforms, ramps, and steps do not command the audiences' attention and yet they are helpful in conveying the message of the play.

Each costume was designed and constructed by the students. The final count revealed fifty costumes had been made for the cast. The soldiers' costumes presented the most serious problems because there was metal involved. Football helmets for the headgear and used aluminum and paper mache were used in the construction of the uniforms. Material for the other costumes was donated by housewives in the community as a result of an article in the local newspaper.

Lighting can be used extensively to create some stirring effects. For the opening scene a student-constructed Linnebach projector was used to throw an image of the three crosses on the sky drop. Background music was added to create an impressive crucifixion scene.



The Boy Friend, Troupe 2005, Turlock, Calif., High School, Robert J. Lacampagne, sponsor 1959-60

PLAYS OF THE MONTH

Edited By EARL BLANK

The music from the motion picture sound track can be used to create some very good moods either during scenes or as musical bridges between scenes. Not all the selections on the record need to be used. The bridges were taped which suited the needs, and then were played over a stereophonic recorder to give the music more life.

Publicity did a splendid job of keeping the public informed about the coming production. Letters, tickets, and posters were sent to neighboring schools, advertisers in the school annual, church groups, and civic groups. Three area newspapers very graciously carried articles and pictures on the play at least once a week for six weeks. But our most effective means of publicity was a sneak preview for the elementary grades. Several parents came to the evening performance because their children wanted to see the show again.

The Robe does open many doorways for the director and students who are interested in upgrading high school dramatics. The time and effort spent on this challenging play does bring tremendous prestige to a drama program.

ROBERT W. SCHMIDT
Sponsor, Troupe 320

THE BOY FRIEND

Turlock, Cal., High School

SANDY Wilson's irresistible spoof on the 'twenties can provide your school with a sure-fire box-office smash. The show's long run in New York and San Francisco illustrates its popular audience appeal. Music, costumes, and dialogue all delightfully satirize the entertainment patterns of another era. Even the plot is a lampoon of the weak-kneed but mirthful "poor boy meets poor, little rich girl" theme so popular in the 'twenties.

Played to an American audience the show has a pronounced international flavor. Action takes place on the French Riviera, at a finishing school for "perfect young ladies"—all English. One of the girls falls in love with a dashing American boy and the remainder for equally dashing Frenchmen. An international climax is the entrance in the third act of a Spanish tango team who do an hilarious dance routine.

The enthusiastic reception our production received was due greatly to the help of our local dance instructor. An excellent choreographer is a must. Our students, incidentally, realized the importance of being "in shape" after trying to Charleston, sing, and act simultaneously. A small orchestra (with banjo) adds to the sparkle of the show;

**THE ROBE
STALAG 17
THE BOY FRIEND
THE GREEN BOUGH**

however, our production successfully utilized twin pianos.

As a prospective musical comedy *The Boy Friend* offers many advantages to a high school. Smaller schools unable to cope with the casts of the magnitude of *Oklahoma* or *Carousel* can stage the show with as little as fifteen people. Although our production was presented in a very large theater, a director will find the show ideally suited for a smaller, more intimate stage. In general, production is relatively easy, and a real advantage is that the show can be presented with only one strong romantic male lead. Musically, loud, strong voices are far more necessary than good singing voices.

It has been the author's experience that a musical comedy takes at least twice the rehearsal time of a straight play. Only a really fine show will keep students working on the pace, sparkle, and energetic drive that are so basic in a musical. *The Boy Friend* is this type of show.

ROBERT J. LACAMPAGNE
Sponsor, Troupe 2005

THE GREEN BOUGH

Walter E. Stebbins H. S., Dayton, Ohio

THE *Green Bough* was a most happy choice for our fourth dramatic production. Our school of twelve hundred students has been in existence only two years, and we had much work in getting organized.

The play is based on the book written by Ann Ritner and was dramatized by Tom Taggart. The book was selected for The People's Bookshelf. The setting is in a small Pennsylvania town in 1910.



Stalag 17, Troupe 126, Alton, Illinois, Senior High School,
Cliff Davenport, director

This play is an exceedingly delightful one, and it is difficult to imagine a group of people more likely to capture your heart than the Goodall family. Mr. Goodall is a widower and decides to marry a spinster schoolteacher much against the wishes of his six children. The accompanying picture shows Mr. Goodall carrying his bride across the threshold much to the disgust of his family. Little by little and bit by bit the new Mrs. Goodall finally wins over each of the children, even the obstinate and hateful 23-year-old Lizzie.

There were really no great problems connected with our play after we discovered two tiny and talented girls to play the seven-year-old girl and her nine-year-old sister. Since our plays are all school plays, a talented junior girl and a little freshman proved to be really tremendous.

The gay amusing things worn in the 1910 era gave the play a nostalgic charm. The cast had great fun co-operating with the costume committee in hunting high-top shoes, high collars,

cart wheel hats, derbies, muffs, and big gold watches.

The high-top shoes presented a problem as we could find only two pairs. However, we solved this problem by making spats from black oilcloth and fastening them with hooks and eyes. We sewed buttons on "just for looks." One girl sewed black buttons on the sides of white socks. She wore black pumps. They really did look like high-top shoes from the audience.

The furniture was gathered from hither and yon. We got an old love seat from one place, an old fashioned leather couch from another, a table, plush album, stereoscope and desk from still other places. The telephone company loaned us an old fashioned telephone.

The shivaree scene presented a problem until we learned to synchronize the noise-making outside with the dialogue inside.

Altogether our problems seemed to disappear like snow off a ditch once we put our heads together, and started to solve them.

ANNA MAE SMITH
Sponsor, Troupe 1950

STALAG 17

Alton, Ill., Sr. High School

UNTIL recently a major problem at Alton Senior High School was casting a good show. There never seemed to be enough boys interested in acting. Then it occurred to us that perhaps the boys simply needed more incentive. We decided to go out on a limb and do *Stalag 17*, which calls for twenty-one boys and no girls. The response, frankly, was astounding. Apparently from nowhere, forty boys appeared for open tryouts, and it was actually difficult eliminating some of the excellent potential material.

When word was circulated that we were in need of army uniforms, the duffle bags rolled in. The local Boy Scout camp offered bunks; the Red

(Continued on Page 26)



The Green Bough, Troupe 1950, Walter E. Stebbins High School, Dayton, Ohio,
Anna Mae Smith, sponsor

ThespianChatter

HONOLULU, HAWAII

Troupe 980

At last! The big moment has arrived to the excited group at Punahou School in Honolulu, Hawaii. The Spring Play was *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, which ran for two stupendous nights. The play was double-cast with Ninia Storrs and Coral Ruprecht as Elizabeth Moulton-Barrett. The set was beautifully furnished with exquisite antique furniture valued at \$1500. Flush, the dog, played by Ilima, stole the show with her natural talent.

Also, three cheers for Coral Ruprecht and Erin Ryan, our two Best Thespians for 1959-1960. They contributed much time and work helping to further our troupe. — Sara Mann, Secretary

WICHITA, KANSAS

Troupe 1327

The years 1959-60 marked the beginning of a great new season for Troupe 1327 under our new director, Betty Ince.

The troupe continued its list of fine plays with the fall all-school production of *Dear Phoebe*, a hilarious comedy based on the television series of the same name. Later, in February, came West High's annual Senior Play, *The Heiress*. This dramatic story of a young girl betrayed by a false love proved to be one of the highlights of the season. Its elaborate



Christmas Pageant, Troupe 734, Shrine of the Little Flower High School, Royal Oak, Mich., Sister Carita, Sponsor

costumes and 1850 period setting added much to the production. To round out the year Troupe 1327 presented the uproarious *Nuts in May*, a comedy derived from a book by Cornelia Otis Skinner, and involving many special properties.

The traditional Thespian Awards Banquet ended what we at West consider a very successful school year, and we are expectantly looking forward to next season. — John Nance, Vice-President

STREATOR, ILLINOIS

Troupe 1677

One of the features about our Thespian Troupe that makes me especially pleased is the way in which its members live up to the part of its membership pledge which charges them with responsibility to their community. We offer an ushering service without charge to any organization in need of this service. This past year we have provided ushers for our Illinois Valley Symphony Orchestra, for our Community Concert Entertainment Series, for a local dancing instructor's ballet, and for our own Civic Association's Fashion Show. Another way in which we serve our community is by providing programs without charge for any local club or organization which calls upon us for entertainment. We also prepared a short old-fashioned "mellerdrama," which was en-

tirely produced and directed by our students, to help raise money for our city Y.M.C.A.

Our year's activities were climaxed with the troupe's sponsoring a Theater Banquet. Everyone who has helped or supported our drama program this year was invited, and all persons came in costume to add to the theatrical atmosphere. At this banquet we initiated our most recent candidates for membership and installed our new officers. The troupe provided entertainment also. Another feature we find especially enjoyable is what we call a mock award ceremony; here we give humorous certificates to "award" the year's biggest boners. The real climax and purpose of the banquet is to award honors to the outstanding work in the field this year. Fortunately our finances allowed us to purchase striking trophies which were given in the following categories: Best Leading Actor, Best Leading Actress, Best Supporting Ac-

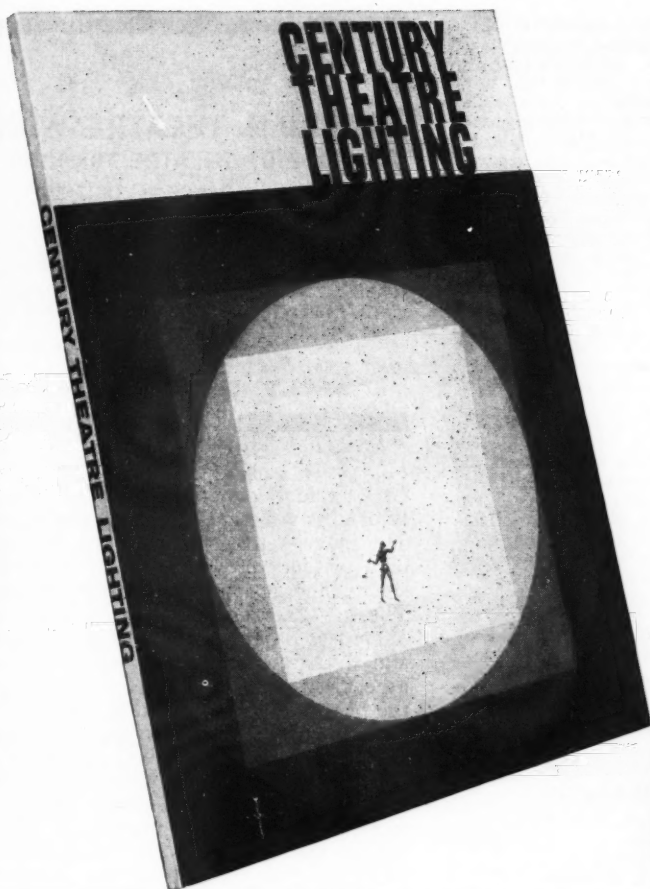
tor, Best Supporting Actress, Best Actor in a Minor Role, Best Actress in a Minor Role, Behind-the-Scenes Award, The Green Award (given for the outstanding performance by a student in his first play), Most Memorable Senior, and Best Thespian.

Although there is no place on the Annual Report for individual work in contests, I believe you would be interested in knowing that members of our troupe brought home the first place trophy from the Illinois State Contests in Speech by placing high enough to tally more points than any other school in competition. In order to compete on the state level, the students had to win on the district level and then on the sectional level. We had three entries qualify for state competition, and two of these three placed second; we were especially proud that our third student took the championship in Comedy Play Reading.

At this point, I wish to thank you for providing me the honor and opportunity of sponsoring a Thespian Troupe. I know these young people have profited a great deal from their association with National Thespian Society and have gained greater insight and appreciation of dramatic arts. I am sorry to say that I am no longer going to be the sponsor of Thespian

1961 — REGIONAL CONFERENCES — 1961

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| FLORIDA
(Northern) | Place, not yet selected, Program Chairman, Ardath Pierce, Northern Florida Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 942, Duncan E. Fletcher High School, Jacksonville Beach, February 24, 25. |
| FLORIDA
(Central) | Osceola High School, Kissimmee, Larry G. Gross, Sponsor, Troupe 565, Program Chairman; Paul Fague, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 177, William R. Boone High School, Orlando, February 25. |
| INDIANA | Central High School, Muncie, Drucilla J. Stillwagon, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 1537, April 22. |
| KANSAS | Dodge City Senior High School, Margaret Brennan, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 318, February 10, 11. |
| MICHIGAN
(Western) | Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Margaret L. Meyn, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 455, Benton Harbor High School, March 25. |
| MISSOURI | Horton Watkins High School, St. Louis, James Striby, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 1109, April 22. |
| MONTANA | Helena High School, Doris Marshall, Sponsor, Troupe 745, Program Chairman; Lloyd Mickelson, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 555, Senior High School, Billings, February 22, 23. |
| NEW JERSEY | Atlantic City High School, Ruth E. French, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 1085, April 29. |
| NEW MEXICO | Highlands University, Las Vegas, New Mexico, Anne E. Shannon, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 1174, Highland High School, Albuquerque, April 6, 7, 8. |
| NEW YORK
(Western) | Drama Festival, State University of N.Y. Agricultural and Tech. Institute, Alfred, New York, Kathleen Wright, Program Chairman; Robert Timerson, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 1286, Trumansburg High School, May 3-7. |
| NEW YORK
(Hudson Valley) | Horace Greeley High School, Chappaqua, John Sweet, Sponsor, Troupe 1224, Program Chairman, May 12. |
| NEW YORK
(Long Island) | Simpson High School, Huntington, Clint Marantz, Sponsor, Troupe 603, Program Chairman; Charles L. Jones, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 861, Port Jefferson High School, May 13. |
| OKLAHOMA | Lawton High School, Lawton, Opel Ford, Sponsor, Troupe 935, Program Chairman; Maybelle Cenger, State Director and Sponsor, Troupe 822, Central High School, Oklahoma City, March 10, 11. |
| OREGON | University of Oregon, Eugene, Melba Day Sparks, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 1782, Madison High School, Portland, February 3, 4. |
| PENNSYLVANIA, OHIO, MARYLAND, NEW JERSEY | Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa., Jean E. Donahay, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 187, John A. Brashear Joint Senior High School, Brownsville, April 15. |



GUIDEBOOK

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Troupe 1677, for I am retiring from teaching to devote more time to my marriage and new home. As yet, no one has been hired for my teaching position, but I am sure that whoever takes the job will continue the troupe work and find as much pleasure and gratification in it as I have. Thank you again for a wonderful association with you. — Mrs. James Peterson, Sponsor

FAIRFIELD, IOWA

Troupe 544

Our most challenging production of the year was *Annie Get Your Gun*, Irving Berlin's famous musical comedy. The production was made possible by the joint efforts of the Drama, Music, and Home Economics departments. The lead, Annie Oakley, was played by our Thespian president, Barbara Smithburg. Capacity crowds enjoyed the two-night musical.

The Thespian contest play this year was *The Wonder Hat*. Our troupe presented the Harlequinade very much as it might have been done in the sixteenth century with the characteristic white make-up, masks, and costumes. However, we added a modern touch by using a musical score from Gilbert and Sullivan operas, and all action and lines were done to the rhythm of this rollicking music.

Our Town by Thornton Wilder was presented by the junior class to an appreciative student body and an enthusiastic adult audience. Again most of the cast were members of Thespians. We proved also that sensitive writing and good portrayal eliminates the need for scenery.

Troupe 544 finished the year with an initiation banquet honoring fourteen new members. — Sara Hourey, Scribe

BEREA, OHIO

Troupe 612

This year Troupe 612 developed in a number of ways. We kicked off the season with our third annual musical, *Oklahoma*. Following this was our participation in the *Student Revue*, which prefaced our *Night of Plays*—a series of one-acts. We wound up our season with providing the M.C.'s for the annual *Water*

Show; doing an experimental play, *Antigone*, and finishing the season with *Time Out for Ginger*. We saw several plays in Cleveland and were privileged to have as our guest lecturer, Marc Connelly, who was appearing with the local college group in *Our Town*.

We finalized our plans for a *Children's Theater* for the '60-'61 year. — Lyn Irwin, Vice-President

PLAINFIELD, INDIANA

Troupe 792

Speech Club has been one of the busiest organizations at Plainfield High School this year. Twenty-two members stronger, the Speech Club began working on their fall production, *Our Miss Brooks*. At the last performance Thespian Troupe 792 was instituted with nine charter members. The cast also began a tradition by presenting Betty Niles, sponsor, with



Tom Sawyer, Troupe 1940, Solanco High School, Quarryville, Pa., Dorothy J. Beyer, Sponsor 1959-60

a charm bracelet to record her plays. *Class Ring* was the spring production. Although both plays were comedies, they had an underlying significance and warm appeal for high school and adult audiences alike.

Other activities that kept the Speech Club busy during the year were one-act student-directed plays at the monthly meetings and a "little kids" Christmas party. Also, the members told stories to grade school children at Christmas and the end of the year. The year's activities were climaxed by the presentation of two Best Thespian Awards to Kathy Kellum and Bill Bally at Class Night. — Kathy Kellum, Thespian

LISBON, OHIO

Troupe 684

In early November, the age-old fantasy of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, our second annual children's play, was presented for the first time by our troupe. We entertained the children from our own district in two performances and then went on the road. We played at several surrounding schools during that month.

In December the lasting beauty of the Christmas carols was magnified as we presented tableaux of Jesus, the Angels, and the whole Christmas host from the ages at the choir's Christmas concert.

In mid-April we presented our first musical, *Meet Me In St. Louis*. This heart-warming comedy of "typical" family life, in which the four Smith girls try to "persuade" their father's boss not to send him to New York, was an enormous success. We had large audiences both nights despite rainy weather. — Linda Baumgarner, Secretary

MADISON, WISCONSIN

Troupe 1999

"What slish is this?" "I'll slit you from your guggle to your zatch!" "Hark, hark, the dogs do bark."

Have we gone mad? No, the above comments are simply lines from James Thurber's musical production of *The Thirteen Clocks*.

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The play itself is very unusual. It has a plot dealing with the supernatural and magic. To add to its uniqueness, we decided to produce it arena style in our gymnasium, using the three basketball circles as main acting areas. Several green and blue trees suggested the forest, bright colored 13 clocks indicated the castle, and the gray jail wall was removed various times for a door frame and chair suggesting Hagga's house. Spotlights for the areas were attached to the gym beams and operated from behind the stage at one end of the gym.

The Thirteen Clocks was a delightful experience for cast, crew, and the audience! — Elaine Schluter, President

PITTSBURGH, PA.

Troupe 895

Troupe 895 of Swissvale (Pittsburgh, Pa.) celebrated its second anniversary this year. We presented *Murder Takes the Stage* and *The Bus Stops Here*.

In addition to this we sponsored a Variety Show and co-sponsored a Moot Trial. Our picnic was rained out, but a few stalwarts did show up. Some of our members were able to attend the Western Pennsylvania Dramatic Arts Conference this spring at Mt. Lebanon High School. Troupe 895's Best Thespian for 1959-1960 was Sally Fish, who played major roles in both the junior and senior class plays.

Next year we hope to put on our usual two three-act plays and two one-act plays for assembly programs if possible. — Rachel Radakovic, Secretary

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STALAG 17

(Continued from Page 23)

Cross gladly loaned us blankets. Plenty of girls were available for crew work. The stage setting, that of the interior of a prisoner of war barracks, was designed and constructed by the school's Theater Practice class. This class is offered as a one semester English credit and deals primarily with the technical aspect of stage production. Studying the play, the class decided that the emotional peak of the play is reached when the barracks spy is revealed and thrown outside to be shot by German guards. With this scene in mind the entrance to the barracks was placed down right, facing the audience. A "searchlight" was placed in the rear of the auditorium, and the sound of machine guns came from the same source. The result was a very exciting and satisfying ending as well as an interesting set arrangement for the remainder of the play.

Once in rehearsal, it became apparent that membership in the play's cast carried some sort of mysterious prestige—not unlike that of the varsity football team. But the most gratifying aspect was to see the enthusiasm of the boys. Many (indeed, most) had never been in a play before. They were curious and eager to learn. These were people and emotions they could begin to understand. (The soldier is quite real to the teen-age boy.) And what boy doesn't enjoy playing at being soldier? The comedy is raucous and poignant. Rewriting to cut out objectionable dialogue presented no problem at all. The audience wasn't aware of the changes.

We of Troupe 126 can recommend *Stalag 17* as a can't-miss selection for any school. And incidentally, we don't anticipate any more trouble for a while in getting boys to try out for plays.

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SPEAKING

(Continued from Page 18)

language choice. Reduce as many pieces and parts of the speech effort to good habit and the unconscious response level. Get into the habit of framing certain thought patterns with good oral style. Creativity by use of good imagination arises from prolonged effort; it is not a chance happening. Repeated oral delivery is the best way to become better in language use. Remember that 80% of communication is oral, and television and radio may increase the ratio. It seems odd that there is so little time spent in many schools to improve oral communication. Many students ignore its existence or impatiently tolerate the urgency for proficiency.

V. Delivery. We have considered the necessity for oral performance in order to exercise the ability in the handling of language. There is another necessity: the concern to make a good speech from the standpoint of delivery. In considering the audience, the speaker must prevent all forms of monotony. This means that in the use of the voice he should avoid sameness in rate of delivery, loudness, and pitch. The rate, volume, and pitch are varied much as we would use oral punctuation. The variation helps bring out meaning, and emphasis tells what the speaker feels is most important. The intelligent speaker may be well informed but still does too little explanatory speaking to convey his knowledge. Oral punctuation and oral composition should show polish and plan. While delivering the speech with purposeful oral variety, try also to capture the best features of naturalness. Try to master the best qualities of conversation or conversation extended. By extension you use the unconscious but persuasive naturalness of the speaker in an intimate group situation, but the voice must reach a much larger group area. The best speech effort would be one where the speaker forgets he is "giving a speech." Thus his message carries a vitality which carries over to his audience.

You may profitably practice giving your speech silently if you can imagine you are speaking aloud, thereby gaining fluency in thought. This can be done when oral practice is not possible. It could be done before you fall asleep in bed or before arising. Both are good times of the day for memory improvement. However, the best practice would be done before a critic. If no critic is available, or before you are ready to appear before a critic, try speaking in an empty room to an imagined audience. If you can speak rather loudly, it is a good voice building routine, and it is easier to cut back on volume than to try suddenly for increased loudness. Try speaking before a full length mirror. It is a gruelling effort, but you realize there are no short cuts to effective speech?

Monotony of posture and random action of the body and hands will minimize with practice. The position of the body should be at ease, but there is no excuse for sloppiness or too much informality. No one can tell you how to use your hands, but a critic can help you use the hands as visual aids to thought. If you try to use hand action as illustrative of thought, the actions should become natural and typical of you as a speaker. However, it would be better to have too few gestures than too many gestures.

Cicero once said that *speech is a great art composed of five great arts*. These five "arts" are (a) expert handling of content, (b) wise arrangement of materials, (c) creative use of language, (d) oral delivery, and (e) retention in memory. These five arts are a great challenge, but the final results are important and gratifying.

VI. Memory Retention. When Henry Ward Beecher was president of Lane Seminary in Cincinnati in the 1830's, the young seminarians asked him how he prepared his pulpit sermons to attain such fame and success as was his. He replied by an analogy saying, "Well, I fill up the barrel, knock out the bung, and then let nature caper." By his advice the prospective speaker can best succeed when he is widely informed. This means that he has much more material than he can use in the one speech. Then if the speaker practices the writing of outlines and brief analyses of many topics followed by oral delivery before imaginary audiences or helpful critics, he is on the right track. Most all speakers suffer from stage fright due to worry about memory retention. This is a natural concern. But memory worry will fade in proportion to amount of preparation and practice. Arrangement of the materials is as natural as sequence or order which naturally leads memory on from one step or division of the materials to the next step in the expected manner.

The Extempore Contest Rules. Usually the contestants draw for order of appearance for drawing of topics from a "hat." The student speakers draw three topics, choose one, and return the other two to the hat. Then each retires to a "library" for one hour. Then he gives the speech which he has been arranging from materials present, but also from a well stocked mind.

Check lists of questions which a judge may apply while evaluating the extemporaneous speech are as follows:

Directness to Listeners

- A. Was the speech done persuasively?
 1. Did the speaker avoid digression?
 2. Was the purpose clear and was it achieved?
 3. Did the content support the purpose strongly?

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 1. Was there a systematic and logical development?
 2. Was all content and its support pertinent?
 3. Was the total speech a strong unit?
- C. Was liveliness achieved by a variety in use of supporting evidence?
 1. Was discriminating judgment evident in selection of content materials?
 2. Did the speaker display depth of knowledge of this topic?
 3. Did the illustrations aid the speaker's purpose?
- D. Was the speech delivered with best effectiveness?
 1. Was interest secured and held?
 2. Did the oral variety properly emphasize meaning?
 3. Was the speaker's manner and attitude appropriate for this message?

STARS ARE BORN

(Continued from Page 15)

Adolph Zukor, who had formed Famous Players, saw her and asked her to play in a film version of the play. The next five years under Zukor were "the happiest years" of her screen life, and her name became a household word.

During this period in torn dresses and with a smudged face, she appeared in some of her best-loved films: *Hearts Adrift* (1914), *Tess of the Storm Country* (1914), *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* (1917), and *Poor Little Rich Girl* (1917). When Famous Players merged with the Jesse L. Lasky Feature Play Company, she was assigned to do two pictures—*Romance of the Redwoods*, a Western melodrama, and *The Little American*, a typical propaganda picture popular during the pre-World War I period, with the Vice-President of the new company who served as his own cameraman, electrician, and director, Cecil B. DeMille. Accustomed to selecting her own scripts and her own writers, the association was not a happy one. As a result, the "father-daughter" relationship which had existed between Zukor and Mary came to an end in 1918. She had formed her own company within Famous Players—a practice common among other "name" stars of the period (William S. Hart, Charles Chaplin, Charles Ray, Clara Kimball Young, Anita Stewart, and others), which indicated the increasing significance of the "star" system. Furthermore, with bonuses and salary she had received \$1,040,000 for two years, the first million dollar contract in movies. A girl of 23 was earning more than the President of the United States! This was the price Zukor had to pay for inaugurating the "star system." As he notes in his autobiography:

We were building the star system, in which I believed and still believe, and our fortunes were staked on it. Study of the audiences, box-office figures, and fan mail left no doubt that people went to see a player they liked—from whom they expected a certain kind of performance. The exhibitor, pleased by this fact, felt that he was benefiting from the star system.

While Mary Pickford's "star" was in the ascendancy, another spectacular "star" was rising whose name would be linked with hers in the affection of the American movie-goer.

In the spring of 1915 a young Broadway actor, noted for his exuberant spirits and gymnastics, was signed by Triangle Pictures, the producers of *The Birth of a Nation*, because of "the splendid humanness that fairly oozed out of him." Born Douglas Ullman in Denver, Colorado, the son of a New York attorney, when his mother was divorced, he assumed her maiden name; and as Douglas Fairbanks (1883-1939) he became "the screen's most adored superman." After a varied schooling which


included a short stay at Harvard and work in Wall Street and on a cattle boat, he finally brought his restless vitality to the theater. Beginning in 1902 under the management of William A. Brady, he began a thirteen-year theater career in which he appeared successfully as a young juvenile and dashing hero in numerous plays. He married the daughter of a wealthy businessman, and a son was born, Douglas, Jr. (1909—). D. W. Griffith, after watching the leaping over tables, doing handstands and other gymnastics, suggested that Triangle's newest actor might do better in Keystone comedies. But the director John Emerson and Anita Loos, a young scenarist, discerned a real talent. They guided him through his first film, *The Lamb* (1915), and turned a studio liability into one of the most admired screen actors of his time.

Double Trouble (1915), *The Good Bad Man* (1916), *The Americano* (1916), *Reaching for the Moon* (1917), *He Comes Up Smiling* (1918), and *His Majesty, the American* (1919) are film titles which typify the character Fairbanks brought to the screen—a high-

spirited athletic American male with a flashing smile. An inveterate show-off, he permitted no "double" to perform his physical feats. As an actor-producer he was concerned only with "pure, unmixed entertainment." As the romantic ideal of male perfection, Douglas Fairbanks is remembered today primarily for his swash-buckling lavish costume pieces: *The Mark of Zorro* (1920), *The Three Musketeers* (1921), *Robin Hood* (1922), probably his best film; the fantasy, *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924), and the first all-color film spectacle, *The Black Pirate* (1926).

On March 28, 1920, having divorced their respective mates, Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford were married. Together, they reigned over Hollywood and the American public. Mary Pickford continued to be "America's Sweetheart" in *Pollyanna* (1920), *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1921), *Dorothy Vernon of Haddon Hall* (1924), and *Little Annie Rooney* (1925). Both continued their careers into the era of the talking film, but they were to share the public's affection with others. While Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford held a

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unique position in the hierarchy of the "stars," the audience of the early silent screen days were creating still other heroes and heroines.

Beginning with the film debut of the suave and handsome Broadway actor, Maurice Costello in 1911, who was to become "the first leading man of the films," the screen heroes included the rugged silent men typified by William S. Hart and William and Dustin Farnum as well as the handsome gentlemen of the silent screen: Carlyle Blackwell, Earle Williams, J. Warren Kerrigan, Wallace Reid, Harold Lockwood, King Baggott, and Thomas Meighan. The heroines too were of many types including the mature and stately beauty of Clara Kimball Young and Pauline Frederick; the vivacious and lovely Anita Stewart, Blanche Sweet, Bessie Barriscale, Marguerite Clark, and Mary Miles Minter; and the first "glamor queens," Alice Joyce and Norma Talmadge. All, as well as lesser luminaries, were idolized by the ever-increasing audience of movie fans who followed the destinies of the "stars" on the screen and in real life. In fact the marriage of Francis X. Bushman and Beverly Bayne, the first noted screen team, had to be kept a secret when they were filming *Romeo and Juliet* (1916) in fear of alienating their public. While the press pictured the "stars" riding to work in white and gold limousines and living in gilded mansions attended by liveried servants, acting for the silent film cameras was an arduous task.

The blonde coquette and screen siren, Mae Murray, a Ziegfeld chorus girl brought to Hollywood by Adolph Zukor, found herself on a set which consisted of two walls and a director. With no previous experience or instruction, the first scene of *To Have and To Hold* (1916) began with the director shouting in a stentorian voice as the cameras went into action:

You hear footsteps. You retreat to the corner. You lean against the door praying. Tremble! I said, "Tremble." That's it. The door is opening. Cut! You're out of camera range.

And the scene began all over again! Then too the performances of the "stars" were often the result of off-camera effects, such as having a gun shot behind them to make them jump or having blinding lights flashed in their eyes for certain facial reactions. The strong lights needed for indoor film-making often resulted in sleepless nights as the result of temporary and painful blindness. The "stars" of the silent screen indeed had to have "intelligence, adaptability, and stamina."

Along with the constellations previously noted, the makers of early silent films and their public created two unique types of "stars," the "vampire" and the "serial queen." The original

"Vampire" was Theda Bara (1890-1955). Her real name was Theodosia Goodman. Actually, the daughter of a Cincinnati tailor, she was introduced as a seductively evil woman—half Cleopatra and half Dracula—by William Fox, the militant independent producer, in his film, *A Fool There Was* (1914). The home-wrecking "vamp" vogue was carried on by Valeska Suratt, Louise Glaum, Barbara LaMarr, the Russian actress, Nazimova, and the pseudo-Russian actress, Olga Petrova. The "serial queens" were the heroines who found themselves in every perilous situation created by the melodramatic mind of man. Actually, the serial originated as a part of a Chicago newspaper circulation war when the Chicago TRIBUNE began publishing the chapters of a thrill-packed serial simultaneously with the showing of a filmed version in the nickelodeons. The sensational and exciting melodramas which literally left the heroine hanging on the

edge of a cliff, or some other equally precarious position, caught the fancy of the movie-going public; and soon Kathlyn Williams (*The Adventures of Kathlyn*, 1913), Pearl White (*The Perils of Pauline*, 1914), and Ruth Roland (*Who Pays?*, 1915) became box office favorites. By 1920 the reign of the "serial queen" was over and the "vampire" had been replaced by more subtle and sophisticated types of screen sirens.

As Alistaire Cook, in his commentary on Douglas Fairbanks, writes: "Screen acting is not so much the functioning of an individual talent as a presentation of raw human material." The silent movies and their audiences created "stars," a Fairbanks, a Theda Bara, a Charles Ray, just as today's projected images of a Kim Novak, a Tab Hunter, or a Rock Hudson on a screen continue the phenomenal constellation pattern established in 1912 when the anonymous "girl with the curls" became Mary Pickford, America's Sweetheart.

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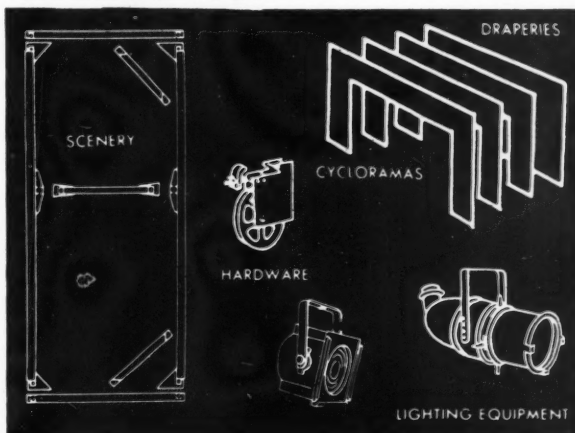
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STUDY DANCE?

(Continued from Page 14)

and dramatically flexible modern medium.

The best way to begin the study of dance, in the opinion of many, is in "creative dance" — the kind allowing identity with people, animals, growing things, and forces in nature like wind and waves. Creative dance stimulates and deepens the imagination. The child or adult learns some simple techniques that develop strength and coordination, learns to listen to music, to move rhythmically. Original sequences of these movements are developed into patterns, and the mental identification with the physical stimulus frees the pupil from self-consciousness and inspires joyous and fearless movement. Children and older pupils work in different classes, of course, and while the techniques may be much the same, the approach is quite different.

As the student progresses, initial exercises are given by many creative dance teachers at the beginning of the class period — drill, involving stretching and building muscles and teaching rhythm, which is often closely related to work given by the ballet teacher.

The next step may be ballet lessons. With children this might begin at the age of eight or nine. However, Mary Clare Sale of Hollywood emphasizes that a wise ballet teacher will guard any pupil not only from beginning too soon but from attempting to advance too fast. An average pupil should never be allowed "on the toes" before gradual strengthening of muscles and bony structure has been effected through several years of careful training. Even the adult student beginning ballet training will gain invaluable results in poise, style, and flexibility without need of toe technique.

Another advantage is the penetration into the great sphere of classical music that ballet brings.

When the pupil enters ballet, should creative dance be dropped?

Ideally, the dancer will continue with both types of study, the early "creative" dance merging into the advanced contemporary forms, as presented by Agnes deMille, Mary Wigman, Harriette Ann Gray, Martha Graham, the late Doris Humphrey, and others. Students of "creative dance" find that they can express dramatic ideas with fairly simple techniques, and they will either like this medium so much that they will continue in it, or they may turn to ballet altogether. But the dual training will contribute to a well-rounded dance education.

Contemporary dance has found its way into most of the colleges and universities of today, and intriguing programs of professional calibre are offered by the students of the University of California at Los Angeles, University of Arkansas, Juilliard School of Music,

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Sarah Lawrence, Stephens and Bennington Colleges, and other educational centers. The Dance Directory of Colleges and Universities, compiled by Mildred Spiesman and published by the National Section on Dance, a department of the National Education Association, lists 55 colleges or universities offering curricula in Dance. Of these, nine have ballet in addition to modern dance; 31 offer majors in dance; 28, teaching certificates. And—a significant fact—all except some of the women's colleges offer coeducational dance classes.

This brings up the question many parents ask—Shall boys study dance? From the purely physical standpoint, certainly boys can derive as much benefit as girls from this training. However, parents should view the question in perspective. A little boy, say, under eight or nine, will undoubtedly enjoy the classes, and, when the time comes, will be all the better at playing ball and boxing because of the training in coordination he has had. When he is nine or ten, if taking dance lessons invests him with a social stigma, the lessons had better be dropped. But it should be noted that if *enough* boys in a community study dance, this problem does not arise. Several teachers have solved it by having a class for boys only. Jose Limon, Charles Weidman, and Doris Humphrey taught classes of men students, many of them on the football team, at Colorado State College. Mr. Weidman adds that he has numbered a great many other football players from all over the country among his pupils.

Another puzzle for parents, and one which they often ask elementary and secondary school teachers to help solve,

is how to choose a good dance instructor or studio. Or perhaps a School Board wants to evaluate the dance qualifications of a prospective physical education teacher.

The first thing to check is the educational background of the teacher under consideration. Is he or she the product of a recognized college, school, studio or professional dance group?

Regarding the private teacher or studio, visiting a class or two should tell the inquiring parent whether the teacher works well with youngsters. Also, most studios have recitals, and viewing these reveals a great deal. How much self-confidence have the students developed? Do they enjoy dancing, or are they frozen automatons? The visitor can judge too whether the teacher tends

to exploit pupils or has the good taste to present them in work they know thoroughly and in dances suitable to their age, avoiding such deplorable phenomena as baby tap-dancers, the travesty of children in "cute" routines and sophisticated costumes, and nervous teen-age girls striving for ballet routines beyond their abilities.

The studio recital is not a professional performance. It should be a demonstration showing that the students are growing in the understanding of rhythm and music, in cultivation of healthy bodies, in developing new aspects of good taste, and in thoughtful and honest study of an art which certainly will add to their cultural resources and may, if seriously pursued, provide means for an interesting and satisfying livelihood.

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BRIEF VIEWS

By WILLARD FRIEDERICH



GREEK TRAGEDY by Gilbert Norwood.
Hill and Wang; 394 pp.

Another Dramabook reprint of a classic, this scholarly report attempts to "cover the whole field" of tragedy in ancient Greece. Chapter I describes the chief writers and their times; Chapter II, the physical theater and the production techniques it employed. For example, the author lists the opinions of well-known experts as to whether there was or wasn't a stage, and then concludes that he agrees there probably wasn't. Then follow three chapters devoted to the synopsis and critical evaluation of each of the extant plays of the great triumvirate: Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. The last chapter is a detailed, illustrated explanation of the intricacies of Greek poetic meter and rhythm.

AN INTRODUCTION TO GREEK THEATRE by Peter Arnott. 1959, Macmillan; 240 pp.

At the age of twenty-seven a young English scholar has explained the background of Greek theater for the "general reader," basing his conclusions on research, visits to sites of the theaters in Greece, his own translations and productions of four of the plays, and his eight years' experience in presenting marionette versions of many of these classics. Mr. Arnott points out that "few things about the Greek theater are certain." Since Greek theater was one of convention rather than illusion (or realism), it had the constant advantage of freedom. Tragedy (a "serious treatment of some moral question as personified in characters of myth and legend") was provided with its plots, but comedy had to invent its own. In either case the Greek drama was not as regimented as some often suppose: "Whatever these Unities meant to the Greeks, they were by no means hard-and-fast rules." Discussions of the chief dramatists and their representative writings (including the satyr plays) are enhanced by an easy, informal style that makes for quick and absorbing reading. A chapter tracing the treatment of Greek comedy by the Romans leads the analysis to its ultimate conclusion. One of the most helpful chapters compares the best known of the English translations ("No translation is perfect"); and the last chapter briefly evaluates contemporary university and professional productions of Greek plays and the influences of Greek theater on such writers as Eliot, O'Neill, Anouilh, Sartre, and Cocteau ("While this sort of writing is theatrically effective, its lasting value is dubious"). In the Appendix the author's own experiences in production prompt him to advise others to rely on "colour, speed and movement."

THE KABUKI HANDBOOK by Aubrey and Giovanna Halford. 1956, Charles E. Tuttle Co.; 487 pp.

A kind of companion piece to the previous book, this handbook performs the same function that our popular opera handbooks do: it lists alphabetically about one hundred "synopses of the more commonly performed plays together with notes explaining many of the conventions and customs, some theatrical, some simply Japanese." The notes are even more interesting, for they include lucid explanations of such things as Actors and Roles (stock roles all, but capable of infinite variety): their diction, costumes, make-up; Other Persons, such as famous acting families, assistant stage manager (the black-clad workers we call property men); Theater Elements, such as curtains, trap doors, the "flower-way," mu-

sic; Japanese Concepts that occur in many plays, such as filial piety, loyalty, selling of human life, suicide, vendetta; Japanese Literature, such as haiku (verse), play cycles, interludes; Common Properties, such as fans, heirlooms, clappers, swords and daggers; Acting Techniques, such as bombastic style, posing, and stage fighting.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CHINESE THEATRE by A. C. Scott. 1959, Theatre Arts, Inc.; 92 pp.

This little book explains those aspects of Chinese theater that confuse western viewers: language barriers, formal and exaggerated gestures, bizarre musical accompaniment. Chinese managers have problems similar to ours: casting the actor whose singing capacities do not favorably compare with his physical suitability for the role, or vice versa. Chinese drama cannot be translated for acting in another language, because the singing and dance-movement cannot be described, but must be handed on from one actor to another as in the past. Brief but adequate descriptions are given of the stage, the scripts, the actors, the four main standardized roles (male, female, painted face, and comic), and the typical theater program ("a pot-pourri which consists of several short plays, excerpts from plays or possibly a complete play"), which usually runs from about 7:30 PM to well after midnight. Twenty of the more famous plays are summarized.

MODERN GERMAN DRAMA by H. F. Gerten. 1959, Essential Books; 272 pp.

This extremely readable history of modern drama in Germany runs from Hauptmann's *Before Sun-Up* in 1889 to the present day. German drama has embraced many theories and concepts because "There is no society, no traditional pattern, no limitation of time and place. Every author faces, as if it were afresh, the void from which to create his own world. Thus German drama ranges, unrestricted by conventions, over the whole field of human experience and imagination. Hence the instability, the diversity, the apparent anarchy of German dramatic literature. Hence, on the other hand, its richness, its untrammelled exploration of every sphere of human experience." To prove his point the author gives, in fascinating detail, the origin and principles of the naturalistic movement, the neo-romantic drama, expressionistic style, the new realism after World War I (including the concept of Epic Theater), and the National Socialist drama during and after Hitler. The important men in all these periods are discussed and their chief plays discerningly evaluated: Sudermann, Hauptmann, Schnitzler, Wedekind, Toller, Kaiser, Brecht, etc., right down to *The Visit* by Durrenmatt.

BROADWAY, U. S. S. R., by Faubion Bowers. 1959, Thomas Nelson and Sons; 227 pp.

A three-months' visit to Russia has resulted in this fluid, informal, enlightening report. All forms of entertainment are covered: the dance and theater in particular, but also TV, movies, the circus, children's theater, puppets, animal theater, variety, concerts, and folk dancing. The more noticeable aspects of the theater are spotlighted: the simple and severe theater interiors, reasonable prices (ranging from about thirty-five cents to \$1.50), lavish technical production, the mixture of old-fashioned declamatory acting with good "method" acting, the wide range of programming (scripts from all periods and countries) that repertory offers, the reverence for Stanislavsky and his methods,

the distortion of American scripts, the dirth of good contemporary Russian playwrights (around one-fifth of the productions are by Russians, and many of these are the old Russian classics), the continuous production of Shakespeare, and so on. Other observations are equally trenchant and significant: the fact that only about twenty newcomers make the grade each year at the Moscow Art Theater; that since Stalin's day the playwright has more freedom and, if the theater is "a sort of weathervane," the new works employ criticism and even satirization of both the Party and Russian life; that, along with repertory's advantages, are the disadvantages of having to use the same actors for all plays, whether they fit the roles in age, tonus, appearance or not and, therefore, of playwrights being virtually forced to write plays to fit the people in the company. Certainly this book will reveal many facets about Russian art and life that we rarely read in the news reports of other visitors.

THE VICTORIAN THEATRE by George Rowell. 1956, Oxford University Press; 203 pp.

Because the essence of Victorian theater—spectacle, Romantic playwrighting, turgid acting—applied to England before and after Victoria's reign, the author extends the period from 1792 to 1914. Since "the history of any theatrical epoch is . . . the history of it audience's wishes," this era was characterized by the building of huge theaters to accommodate the industrial masses who soon crowded out polite society and demanded "their money's worth." The results were a broadening of acting style to reach the farthest listener, a lengthening of the bill to as much as six hours, an emphasis upon technical spectacle to please patrons of average intelligence and experience. The playwright, consequently, sank into oblivion, and the age became one of actors and managers. Eventually the later Victorian writers "evolved a drama serious in tone, realistic in method, and general in appeal." In an engrossing manner the author describes the theaters, audiences, staging methods, technical devices, and acting styles. The unnoteworthy but yet famous closet dramas of the Romantic poets, the Gothic dramas, melodramas, and burlesques of Bulwer-Lytton, Boucicault, Taylor, Robertson, et al were followed by the compromise attempts at social drama by Pinero, Jones, and Wilde and, the ultimate return to intellectual drama, by the plays of ideas by Shaw. Even though the results of the era were not great, the personalities were, including such individuals as Mme. Vestris, Gilbert and Sullivan, Irving, Kean, and Macready. An extensive bibliography and a selected list of plays by the writers of the period complete the book.

THE IRRESISTIBLE THEATRE by W. Bridges-Adams. 1957, World Publishing Co.; 446 pp.

The founder and director of the Stafford-on-Avon Festival Theater from 1919 to 1936 has presented, in his own terms, a "vulgarization" or history that "aims no higher than to introduce the general reader to the history of the English stage in all its aspects." If this means a readable book that is accurate but not weighted down with the frequently dull details of the "scholarly" work, then perhaps we should have more like it. Part I, "From the Conquest to the Tudors," summarizes in about sixty pages the medieval religious and secular drama and its production. Part II, "From the Tudors to the Commonwealth," introduces the Elizabethan age, takes us through it to the closing of the theaters in 1642. The great and less-great names of these years all appear, together with brief descriptions of the society, the theaters, the audiences, the chief companies, the style of acting, the types of drama and styles of writing, and of course the ultimate evaluation of the great works of the age, great, as the opera is great, because of their musically poetic medium rather than their content and organization.

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